DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 277 402 IR 051 746

TITLE Statistics of Public Libraries, 1982. [and] Public Library Expenditures in the U.S., Fiscal Year 1982-83.
INSTITUTION Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC.
REPORT NO CS-85-208b; CS-86-201b
PUB DATE 86
NOTE 10p.
PUB TYPE Collected Works - General (020) -- Statistical Data (110) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Computers; Income; Interlibrary Loans; Library Collections; Library Expenditures; Library Personnel; *Library Statistics; *National Surveys; *Public Libraries; *State Aid

ABSTRACT

Based on a survey conducted by the Center for Statistics (CS), statistical information on public libraries is presented for fiscal year 1982-83. An Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) Historical Report provides statistical data on the following aspects of public libraries in Fall 1982: (1) outlets; (2) staff; (3) receipts; (4) expenditures; (5) collections; (6) usage; (7) interlibrary loans; (8) use of computers; and (9) hours and days open. The survey methodology and reliability of estimates are also discussed, and seven tables of statistical data supplement the text. Public library expenditures for fiscal 1982-83 are summarized in an OERI Bulletin, which reports that state and local governments spent more than $2 billion on public libraries during this period, a total of approximately $9.46 per person and less than one-half of 1 percent (0.39 %) of total state and local general government expenditures. Public library expenditure per person and public library share of state and local expenditures in 1982-83 are presented in tabular form and also represented graphically by two maps. (KM)

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Historical report
OERI
Center for Statistics
U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement

FD277402

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March 1986

Statistics of Public Libraries, 1982

Almost 70,600 library outlets served the public in fall 1982, according to a survey conducted by the Center for Statistics (CS). The majority of these outlets (50,000) were bookmobile stops, underscoring the special effort public libraries have made to bring services to users (table 1). These stops supplemented about 8,600 central libraries, 6,900 branch libraries, and 5,100 other outlets.

Table 1.—Public library outlets: Fall 1982

Category	Number	Percent
Total outlets	70,572	100.0
Central libraries	8,597	12.2
Branch libraries	6,943	9.8
Scheduled bookmobile stops	49,981	70.8
Other*	5,051	7.2

*Includes gathering points, especially in rural areas, outside of bookmobile routes, e.g., post offices, grocery stores, senior citizen centers, Head Start centers, etc.

Public Library Staff

Overall, public libraries employed more than 92,000 staff in 1982, of which 41 percent were professional, 54 percent were technical, clerical, and other staff, and 6 percent were plant operation and maintenance personnel. The percentages for specific groups of libraries varied according to the size of the population they served. For example, for those serving populations under 10,000, about two-thirds of the staff were professionals. This fraction dropped to one-third for libraries serving 1 million or more. The support staff made up only 29 percent of the total staff for libraries serving under 10,000 people but grew to 59 percent for those serving 1 million or more (table 2).

Almost two-thirds of all public libraries had from 1 to 10 full-time-equivalent (FTE) professional staff members. One percent of all public libraries employed over 50 FTE professionals, and at the other end of the scale, 19 percent employed only 1 FTE professional (not shown in tables). The average number of FTE professionals employed in public libraries ranged from 1 in those serving small populations (under 10,000) to 18 in those serving intermediate-size populations (100,000 to 249,000), and 200 in libraries serving populations of 1 million or more (table 3).

Table 3.—Average number of full-time professional staff in public libraries, by size of population in area served: Fall 1982

Population of area served	Number of professional staff*
All public libraries	4.4
Under 10,000	1.3
10,000-24,999	3.4
25,000-49,999	6.4
50,000-99,999	9.9
100,000-249,999	18.3
250,000-499,999	47.8
500,000-999,999	99.6
1,000,000 and above	200.4

*Rounded to the nearest tenth.

A comparison with historical data shows a downward trend in the number and proportion of public library professional staff with less than a bachelor's degree (table 4). In 1982, only 22 percent of the professional staff had less than a bachelor's degree, down from 33 percent in 1974.[1]

[1]Data from the 1974 and 1978 surveys were extracted from reports that did not provide information on measurement errors. Therefore, any comparison with these data contains a certain but unknown error, must be viewed with caution, and is primarily of general historical interest.

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Table 2.—Public library staff, in full-time equivalents (FTE), by major staff category and by population of area served: Fall 1982

Population of area served	Number of libraries	Total staff (FTE)		Professional staff (FTE)		Technical, clerical, and other staff (FTE)		Plant operation and maintenance staff (FTE)	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent of total	Number	Percent of total	Number	Percent of total
All public libraries	8,597	92,179	100.0	37,570	40.8	49,283	53.5	5,325	5.8
Under 10,000	5,495	10,740	100.0	6,902	64.3	3,114	29.0	724	6.7
10,000-24,999	1,454	10,924	100.0	4,963	45.4	5,314	48.6	646	5.9
25,000-49,999	770	12,135	100.0	4,897	40.4	6,631	54.6	607	5.0
50,000-99,999	483	13,083	100.0	4,732	36.6	7,760	59.3	541	4.1
100,000-249,999	257	12,933	100.0	4,708	36.4	7,589	58.7	636	4.9
250,000-499,999	76	9,958	100.0	3,631	36.5	5,849	58.7	477	4.8
500,000-999,999	49	13,257	100.0	4,879	36.8	7,639	57.6	739	5.6
1,000,000 and above	14	9,148	100.0	2,806	30.7	5,388	58.9	954	10.4

Note.—Details may not add to totals because of rounding.

Table 4.—Professional staff in public libraries, by highest degree earned: Fall 1974 and 1982

Highest degree earned	Staff in fall of year				Percent change*
	1974		1982		
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Total	36,000	100.0	37,600	100.0	+4.4
Less than bachelor's	11,900	33.0	8,400	22.3	−29.3
Bachelor's	7,300	20.2	8,000	21.3	+9.6
Graduate	16,900	46.8	21,200	56.4	+25.4

*Calculated on unrounded numbers.
Note.—Details may not add to totals because of rounding.

Library Receipts

In fiscal year 1981-82, public libraries received about $2.3 billion in revenues (not shown in tables).[2] Of this amount, 80 percent ($1.8 billion) came from local sources, 7 percent ($167 million) from State sources, 4 percent ($82 million) from Federal sources, and 9 percent ($212 million) from other sources. From 1978 to 1982, total receipts and those from local sources increased by about half, while receipts from State sources rose by about 60 percent. Receipts from Federal sources dropped by nearly a third. However, in mid-1982 the Consumer Price Index was 50.3 percent higher than in mid-1978; therefore, only State receipts were higher in constant dollars.

Library Expenditures

Public libraries spent $2.2 billion in fiscal year 1981-82, representing a slight increase in constant dollars since the last survey (1977-78). The largest expenditure was $1.2 billion for salaries and wages (table 5). The next largest was $322 million for library materials, which included $251 million for books, $36 million for periodicals, $7 million for microforms, $6 million for binding and rebinding, and $22 million for audiovisual and other materials (not shown in tables).

Library Collections

Public libraries stocked over 494 million volumes of books representing 307 million titles in 1982 (not shown in tables). In that year alone, they added 30.2 million new volumes to their collections, representing 16.4 million titles. However, many of these libraries were small. Over half (53 percent) reported holding less than 20,000 volumes. Overall, public libraries held 9.5 million bound volumes of periodicals, a sharp increase from 1978. Book holdings were up modestly, while subscription titles, totaling about 1 million, remained little changed from 1978 (not shown in tables).

[2]Dollar amounts are in current dollars unless otherwise noted.

Table 5.—Library expenditures, by category: Fiscal year 1981-82

Category	Amount (in thousands)	Percent
Total	$2,209,609	100.0
Salaries and wages	1,195,706	54.1
Materials	321,612	14.6
Equipment	30,000	1.4
Computer costs*	35,240	1.6
Plant operation and maintenance	215,971	9.8
Capital outlay	111,577	5.0
Other expenditures	299,503	13.5

*Includes $14.8 million for contracted computer services.

Public Library Usage

A total of 15.5 million people visited libraries in a typical week in 1982, nearly twice those reported in 1978. As might be expected, the number of visits varied by the size of the population served (table 6). Over 1.1 billion items were charged out to users in 1982, a substantial increase from the estimated 986.7 million used in 1978.

Interlibrary Loans

Many public libraries borrow materials from other libraries of all types, including other public libraries. In 1982, they provided 4.3 million such loans and received 4.8 million. Libraries serving populations under 25,000 received approximately half of all interlibrary loans.

Table 6.—Public library attendance and circulation, by population served: Fiscal year 1982.

Population served	Number of libraries	Attendance per typical week	Circulation*
		(In millions)	
Total	8,597	15.5	1,113.2
Under 10,000	5,495	1.5	130.4
10,000 to 24,999	1,454	1.5	136.2
25,000 to 49,999	770	1.7	152.6
50,000 to 99,999	483	2.7	158.8
100,000 to 249,999	257	3.1	163.8
250,000 to 499,999	76	1.9	121.4
500,000 to 1,000,000	49	1.6	163.6
Over 1,000,000	14	1.5	86.4

*Number of items charged out to users.
Note.—Details may not add to totals because of rounding.

Use of Computers

The use of computers in various library functions is new enough that the 1982 survey was the first CS library survey to include questions on such usage. It found that the percentage of all public libraries using computers was rather low, as the following list shows:

Computer use	Percent of libraries
acquisitions	3.4 percent
public access catalog	1.9 percent
computer output microfilm catalog	3.4 percent
reference	4.6 percent
circulation	5.1 percent
interlibrary loan	8.0 percent
serials control	1.2 percent
administration	6.0 percent
other functions	5.7 percent

In each of the functions listed, suburban public libraries had both the highest number and the highest percentage of libraries using computers. About 9 percent of all public libraries had microcomputers; 48 percent of these libraries permitted free public access to the microcomputers, 16 percent permitted public use for a fee, and the other one-third did not permit public access.

Library Hours and Days Open

More than half (53 percent) of all public libraries were open fewer than 40 hours per week. This proportion was higher (70 percent) for small libraries serving under 10,000 people. Over one-sixth of the libraries (17 percent) were open 40 to 50 hours per week. Another 30 percent were open 50 hours or more per week. Half (50 percent) of all public libraries were open 6 days per week, and 7 percent were open 7 days per week (table 7). Urban libraries tended to be open more days, with one-third open 7 days a week.

Methodology

The survey sample included 1,481 main public libraries out of a universe of 8,597 for the 50 States and the District of Columbia. The sample was selected with stratifications by region, SMSA location, and size of population served. Of these selected libraries, 1,349 responded, yielding a response rate of 91 percent. The sampling weights adjusted to correct for nonresponse bias.

Reliability of Estimates

Statistics used in this report are subject to sampling variability. The estimated standard error of a statistic (a measure of variation due to sampling) can be used to examine the precision obtained in a particular sample. If all possible samples were surveyed under similar conditions, intervals of 1.645 standard errors below to 1.645 standard errors above a particular statistic would include the average result of these samples in approximately 90 percent of the cases. For example, for the first item in table 2 (number of professional staff in all libraries), a 90 percent confidence interval is from 36,873 to 38,267 (37,570 plus or minus 1.645 times 424). If this procedure were followed for every possible sample, about 90 percent of the intervals would include the average number from all possible samples. It should be noted, however, that the standard error reflects primarily the imprecision of the estimate due to sampling. The standard error does not include the effects of any biases due to nonresponse, measurement error, processing error, or other systematic error that would occur even in a complete survey or census.

Table 7.—Percent of libraries open during a week, by number of days and location: Fall 1982

Library location	Number of days open		
	Less than 6	6	7
	(In percents)		
All libraries	42.6	49.9	7.5
SMSA* central (urban)	5.7	61.9	32.3
SMSA other (surburban)	29.7	58.6	11.6
Outside SMSA (rural)	53.2	43.8	3.0

*SMSA (Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area). Census figures from 1982 show that roughly two-thirds of the U.S. population lived in central cities and the surrounding rings that form the SMSA's.
Note.—Details may not add to totals because of rounding.

In general, the standard error of a statistic (number or dollar amount) cited in the text is about 1 to 2 percent of the statistic. The following statistics and their standard errors are given as illustrations:

Categories	Statistic	Standard error
Professional staff	37,570	424
Professional staff with graduate degree	21,200	282
Books (volumes held)	449,149,128	3,510,330
Books (volumes added)	30,203,701	451,953

As noted earlier, standard errors cannot be estimated for comparisons of the data from the 1974, 1978 and 1982 surveys, so such comparisons may not be statistically dependable.

For More Information

Additional information can be obtained from Milton Chorvinsky, Center for Statistics, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20208-1628, telephone number (202) 254-7351.

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December 1985

Public Library Expenditures in the U.S. Fiscal Year 1982-83

State and local governments spent more than $2 billion on public libraries in fiscal year 1982-83, according to the Center for Statistics. This amounts to about $9.46 per person and represents less than one-half of one percent (0.39 percent) of total State and local general government expenditures for 1982-83.

States vary considerably in the amount they spend on public libraries, ranging from a high of $279.1 million in California to a low of $3.6 million in Vermont. These State expenditure figures, however, need to be considered in light of the size and population of the individual States.

Public library expenditures per person are highest in Alaska at $31.32, the District of Columbia at $23.44, Wyoming at $17.70, and Washington at $17.53 (figure 1).

When expressed as a percentage of total State and local general expenditures, the highest public library fiscal effort was in Connecticut at 0.63 percent, Maryland at 0.57 percent, and Iowa at 0.56 percent (figure 2).

Arkansas, Georgia, Mississippi, Pennsylvania, and Tennessee fell into the lowest category on both expenditure per person and expenditure as a share of total State and local expenditure.

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Figure 1. Public Library Expenditure Per Person
1982-83

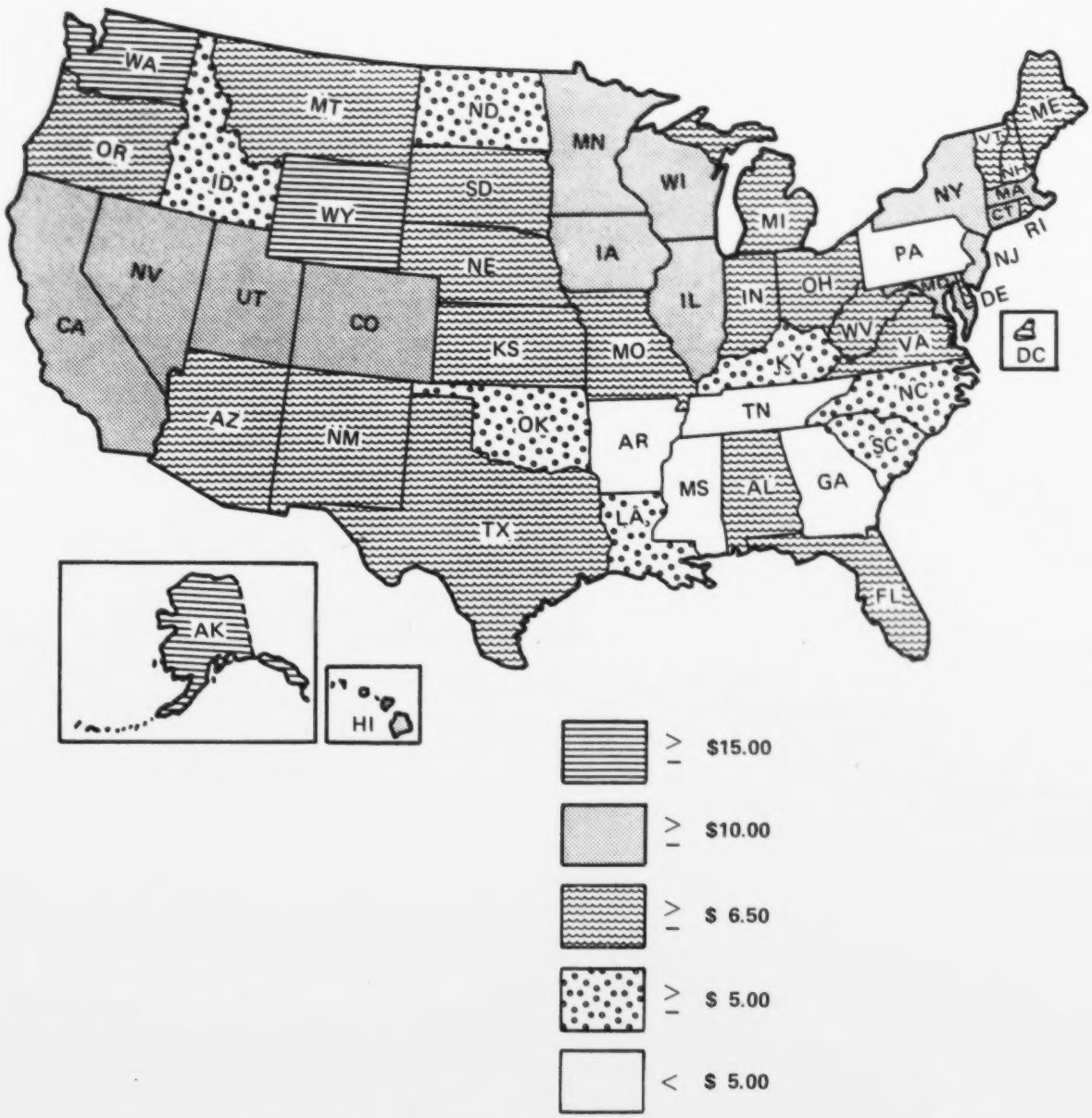
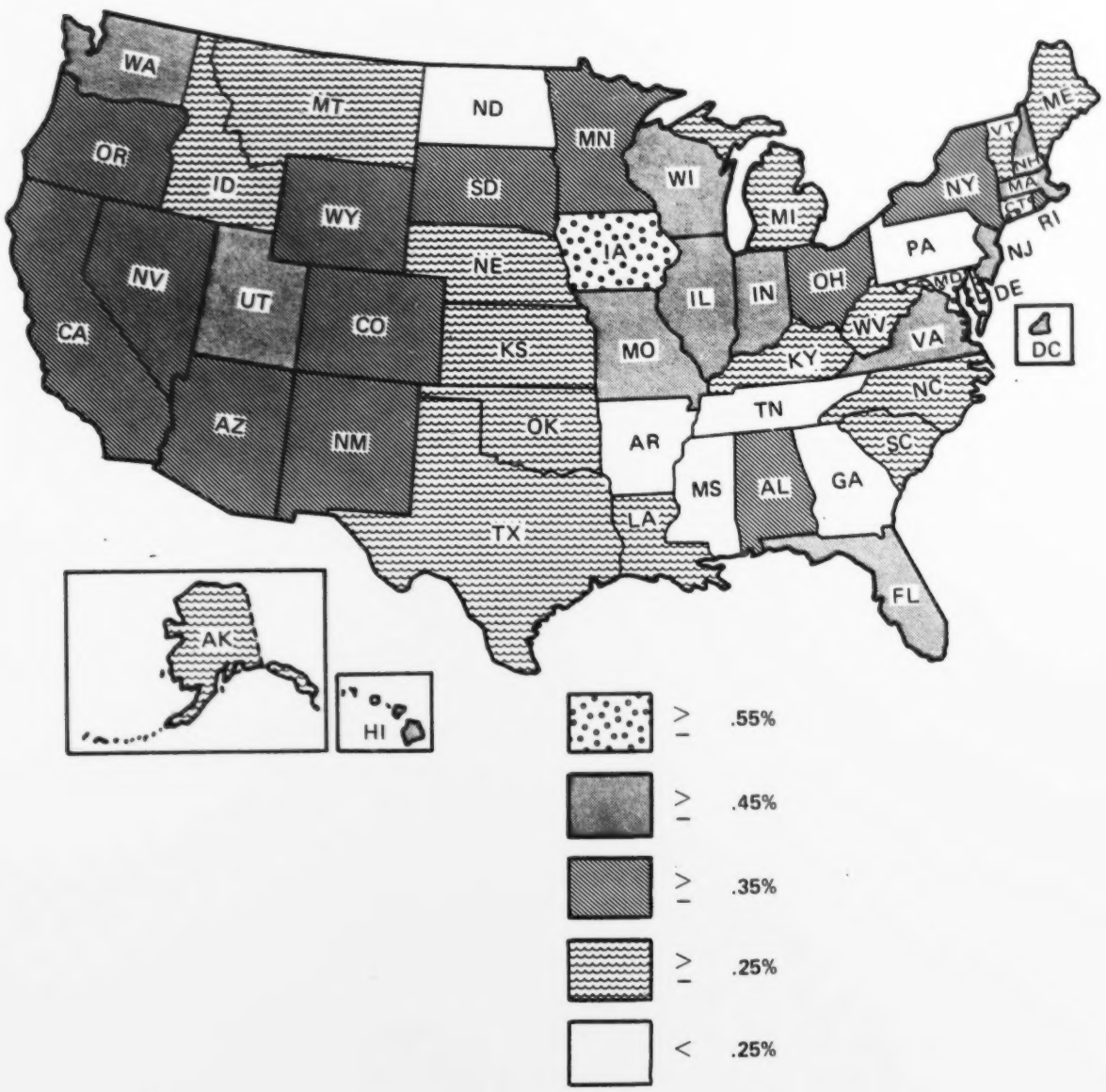


Figure 2. Public Library Share of State and Local Expenditures
1982-83



Public Library Expenditures -- Amount, Amount Per Person, and as a Percentage of Total States and Local Government Expenditures -- for the Nation and Individual States, 1982-83

State	Expenditure	Expenditure per person population	Expenditure as a share of total state and local expenditure
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	(millions of dollars)	(dollars)	(percent)
United States	$2,213.2	$ 9.46	0.39
Alabama	29.1	7.35	0.36
Alaska	15.0	31.32	0.31
Arizona	27.4	9.25	0.38
Arkansas	8.0	3.44	0.22
California	279.1	11.09	0.40
Colorada	33.2	10.58	0.42
Connecticut	45.1	14.37	0.63
Delaware	4.0	6.60	0.27
District of Columbia	14.6	23.44	0.46
Florida	104.5	9.78	0.50
Georgia	21.6	3.77	0.17
Hawaii	14.0	13.69	0.50
Idaho	6.2	6.27	0.34
Illinois	124.0	10.80	0.47
Indiana	48.9	8.93	0.49
Iowa	37.9	13.05	0.56
Kansas	17.6	7.26	0.32
Kentucky	19.0	5.12	0.28
Louisiana	28.3	6.38	0.25
Maine	7.5	6.54	0.32
Maryland	61.5	14.29	0.57
Massachusetts	72.0	12.48	0.47
Michigan	71.6	7.90	0.29
Minnesota	46.7	11.27	0.41
Mississippi	10.8	4.17	0.23
Missouri	39.7	7.99	0.47
Montana	6.6	8.08	0.33
Nebraska	12.2	7.64	0.27
Nevada	9.1	10.21	0.36
New Hampshire	8.9	9.28	0.47
New Jersey	85.7	11.48	0.48
New Mexico	12.5	8.94	0.35
New York	256.1	14.50	0.43
North Carolina	36.7	6.03	0.33
North Dakota	3.9	5.74	0.24
Ohio	88.5	8.24	0.36
Oklahoma	17.8	5.40	0.26
Oregon	26.2	9.84	0.36
Pennsylvania	59.4	4.99	0.22
Rhode Island	9.2	9.63	0.39
South Carolina	17.6	5.39	0.29
South Dakota	5.9	8.43	0.41
Tennessee	23.1	4.93	0.22
Texas	108.4	6.89	0.33
Utah	19.3	11.92	0.46
Vermont	3.6	6.86	0.29
Virginia	55.4	9.98	0.51
Washington	75.4	17.53	0.54
West Virginia	13.5	6.87	0.33
Wisconsin	61.9	13.03	0.54
Wyoming	9.1	17.70	0.44

Sources: Expenditures from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Governmental Finances in 1982-83, October 1984 and populations from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, Series P-25, No. 957, October 1984.